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ABSTRACT

A site visitation of the Bilingual Program at Choctaw Agency indicated that the program would be implemented during the 1975-76 school year. The program will involve teaching the reading and writing of the Choctaw language combined with teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). A structured approach will be used in teaching ESL to the Choctaw Indian students beginning with kindergarten and continuing through third grade. The strategy for teaching the Choctaw language will adhere to a technique called "Parity Bilingual Program". This technique utilizes the symbolic approach. Focusing on K-1, the methodology is to involve learning one symbol and one sound together. Other symbols and sounds will be developed from the original symbol. The acquisition of skills from this method would then be transferred to that of reading and writing the English language. This report presents a sample lesson plan. (NQ)

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RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT SERIES NO. 23-C

SITE VISITATION
CHOCTAW LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM
MISSISSIPPI CHOCTAW AGENCY SCHOOLS
PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI
AUGUST 7, 8, 1975

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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A REPORT

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THE REPORT

The Bilingual Program at Choctaw Agency definitely appeared to be getting off-ground and should be beginning August 12, 1975 as the entire Choctaw School System opens for the school year 1975-1976.

I was fortunate to visit with the staff of the Bilingual Education for Choctaws of Mississippi, (BECOM). The three day workshop held at Choctaw Central High School brought together teachers, teacher aides, principals, tribal leaders, bilingual education experts, Indian Health personnel, title program people and the BECOM staff. The workshop provided the opportunity to share plans for the year and the BECOM staff, headed by Mr. Ken York, outlined their plans relative to the new bilingual program that will involve teaching the reading and writing of Choctaw Language combined with teaching English as a Second Language, (ESL).

The responsibility of teaching of ESL appears to be resting, totally, with the classroom teacher, however, the Choctaw speaking teacher aides are to be utilized. Mr. Loren Nussbaum and Mr. Alvin Cearley, Directors of the BECOM Project reported they were using structured approach in teaching ESL to the Choctaw Indian students beginning with Kindergarten and to continue through third grade. The program, reportedly, was developed in California and used extensively in Texas and New Mexico. Mr. Nussbaum said the Region One Curriculum Kit, (ROCK) is designed for grades K-5, however, presently, they wanted to implement it K-3. The ROCK ESL Program is designed to provide for the teacher an ESL approach in teaching all subjects in the early grades. The ROCK Program has arranged the ESL aspect in sequential order of material that is designed for each grade as follows: Core English One, Core English Two, etc.

The Choctaw Language teaching appeared to be an almost total responsibility of the teacher aides and the BECOM staff who will provide the back-up support and develop an on-going de-bugging process as the program progresses.

A testing plan by the BECOM staff appears to have promises in providing data that will prove interesting to anyone interested in the program's progress. Mr. Nussbaum explained that a battery of pre-test will be administered to all the students as they begin and again administer the same tests at the end of the year. This should provide information as to whether the Choctaw youngsters are benefitting from the program. These battery of tests will be tests in English as a foreign language. It was also explained that the teachers will be administering tests as they progress in the program. These numerous tests should provide valuable information.

The strategy for the teaching of the Choctaw Language will adhere to a technique termed Parity Bilingual Program, (See Table I), that utilizes the symbolic approach. It was explained by Mr. York that K-1 would be their primary focal point and would progress to other grades from there. The methodology is to involve learning one symbol and one sound together and other symbols and sounds would be developed from the original symbol. The acquisition of skills from this method would then be transferred to that of reading and writing the English Language. A sample lesson plan is attached.

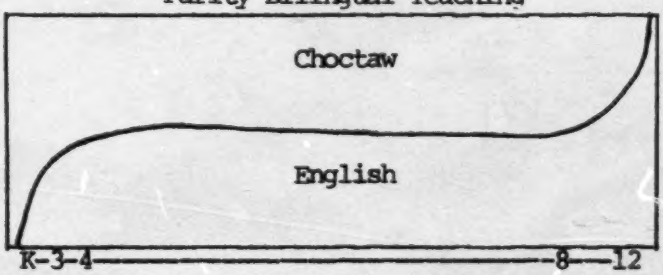
I would strongly urge the BIA Central Office to keep abreast of all or most of the native language teaching programs that are in progress or

being initiated. A longitudinal study or observation of one or two exceptional programs may pay dividends in providing data whether this approach is going to have long-range impact on the learners.

Eugene Leitka
Observer

TABLE I

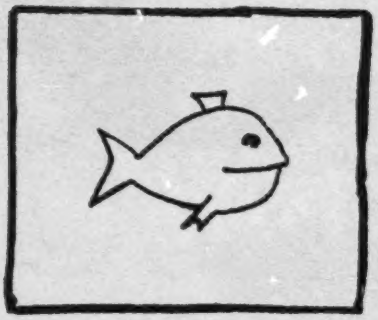
Parity Bilingual Teaching



(York-Enochs, 1975)

The model above attempts to depict the thrust of the Parity Bilingual Teaching of the Choctaw Language. Primary emphasis is stressed in teaching Native Language at K-4 and levels off from there to the 8th grade. It appears to be entering a phase of de-emphasis of the Native Language teaching from the 8th grade to the completion of the 12th grade. As the model depicts, at Kindergarten, the Native Language learning in reading, writing, and speaking seems to be primary and the emphasis is reversed at the completion of high school.

Lesson 1

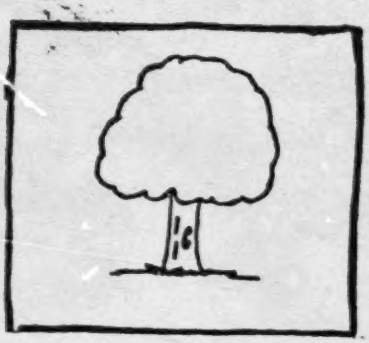
1. 

nani

1. Teach the key word nani: This (pointing) is a picture of nani. Say nani. This (pointing) word says nani. Say nani

2. nani nani
na ni

2. Breakdown: (Write nani on the board, cover the ni syllable.) What is the sound of the first part of nani? (Write na under nani.)

3. 

iti

3. Teach the key word iti: This is a picture of iti. Say iti. This word says iti. Say iti.

4. iti iti
ti i

4. Breakdown: (Write iti on the board, cover the i syllable.) What is the sound of the first part of iti? (Write ti under iti.)

5. na ni ti i
nani nani iti iti

5. Build up: (Write na on the board.) What does this say? (Write nani on the board under na.) What does this say? (Repeat this procedure for the remaining pairs.)

6.

nani	na	i	ti
iti	ni	ti	ni
	ti	ni	na

7.

ni	na
ti	ta

8.

ta	ta
nita	tana

9.

nani	ta	na
iti	ti	ta
nita		
tana		

6. Review: (Write nani on the board.) What does this say? (Write iti on the board.) What does this say? (Continue this same procedure for the syllables. After all the syllables are on the board, have the class read the syllables down the columns, across the columns, and then randomly as you point.)

7. Extension to ta: (Write ni, ti, and na on the board.) (Pointing) What does this say: (Then write ta. Ask them again to read ni, ti, and na. Then point to ta.) What does this say?

8. Build up of new words: (Write ta on the board.) What does this say? (write nita under ta.) What does this say? (Use the same procedure to teach tana.)

9. Review: (Write the words and syllables on the board. Drill each group briefly.)

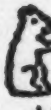
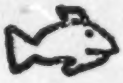
10. Story:

a) Read the entire story for the class.

b) Give each pupil a copy of the "A" version of the story. Read the story again, stopping to let the pupils "read" each of the pictures in the appropriate place in the story

c) Give each pupil a copy of "B" version of the story. Read the story again, stopping to let the pupils read each of the underlined words at the appropriate place in the story

RECOM
Lesson 1, "A"

Okkatahmą at lawa hihǫ acaffa kakoš kašikąčak hoš ibafokkah. cito čahat okkatah atthihmą hikiyahǫ  at atat hikiyača itthimanǫpolih bikah. Hikma tali notaka kanako  at itthǫlakma kašikąčak mat imanolikmą at ąthokliča apa bikah. Hihǫkaš kašikąčak mat imakahmat "anano nanit issapa hikiyoh. Issapa hokmat yaloba ištoba hina hokih," imacihtok. at lawahoš okkatah ątto tokǫ at momit hokliča apakna binit apat tahlitokoš ipa bannah mǫmah mat kanik kiya kašikąčak hokliča apa tokakoš at yaloba tobača apakna binilina acaffa momakat ątta tokoš ilapakǫ apahtok.

BECOM
Lesson 1, "B"

Okkatahmą nani at lawa hihą nani acaffa kakoš kašikąčak haš ibafąkkah. Iti čito čahat okkatah atthmą hikiyahą nita at atat hikiyača ittimanąpolih bikah. Hikmą tali notaka kanaką nani at ittąlakmą nani kašikąčak mat nita imanąlikmą nita at ąthokliča apa bikah. Hihokaš nani kašikąčak mat nita imakahmat "anano nanit issapa hikiyoh. Issapa hokmat yaloba ištoba hina hokih," imacihtok. nani at lawahoš okkatah atto toką nita at momit hokliča iti apakna binit apat tahlitokoš ipa bannah mąmah mat kanik kiya nani kašikąčak hokliča apa tokakoš nita at yaloba tobača iti apakną binilina nani acaffa mąmakat ątta tokoš ilapaką apahtok.

Bilingual Education for
Choctaws of Mississippi
uly, 1975

TEACH YOURSELF TO READ CHOCTAW

If you can speak Choctaw and read English, you can teach yourself to read Choctaw.

To start with, some Choctaw words look and sound almost like English words.

Look at these words.

nita	(bear)
nipi	(meat)
nani	(fish)
noti	(tooth)
tahi	(cane)
tobi	(beans, peas)

Now look at this next group of words. Can you read them?

tana	tali	niya
nona	bila	naki
Pita		towa

If you need some help, here is the English translation of these words.

weave	stone	fat
cooked	oil	bullet
Peter		ball

Here are some more Choctaw words that look and sound almost like English: (Use the English translations below, if necessary):

ofi	apisa	katos
oka	ahoha	takon
iti	apala	lowak
ahi	pikayo	tanap
api	liman	baloni
dog	window	cat
water	room	apple
tree	pan	fire
potato	nickle	turnip
stem	lemon	baloney

Can you read these Choctaw sentences? (If they are hard, read the English questions below. The Choctaw sentences are answer to these questions.)

Nitayat losa.
Niplat okpolo.
Naniat lawah.
Notiat kobafa.
Tabiat yoskololi.
Tobiat lowa.

(What color is the bear?)
(What is spoiled?)
(Are there plenty of fish?)
(What is wrong with the tooth?)
(What is wrong with the cane?)
(Are the beans good?)

Here is a short story. Can you read it?

Nita losayat nani hotiyahmat tobi honit talalitok. Nani ikhoklohmat falamat alatokma tobiat lowa atok. Hina nipi hotiat okissa tiwihma ofiyat nipi apat tahlitok. Hihma nita losayat tabi yoskoli pilahmat ofi noti issot kobaffitok.

(If the story is hard to read, these questions may help you.)

(Who went fishing?)
(What did he leave cooking?)
(Did he catch any fish?)
(What happened to the bean?)
(What happened to the meat?)
(Who threw a cane at the dog?)
(What happened to his teeth?)

Choctaw also has some letters which look and sound a little different from English letters.

The next lesson will give you practice in reading words with these letters

You can also teach yourself to write Choctaw. In the exercise below, read the English translation first, then complete the Choctaw word using the letters; n, k, t, p, b, and l:

bear	__ita
fish	__ani
somebody	ka__a
bullet	na__i
water	o__a
cat	__a__os
apple	__a__on
day	ni__a__
meat	__ipi
train	__i__i
stone	__ali
oil	__i__a
fire	__owa__
pan	a__a__a

Only three vowels are necessary for writing Choctaw: a, i, o. In English these letters can have several different sounds, but in Choctaw each of them has only one sound. Read the following words and notice that the sound of the letter "a" is always the same:

api
nani
takon
nita
katos

Now listen for the sounds of "i" and "o" in the following groups of words:

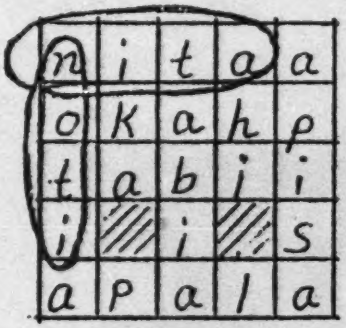
iti	ofi
nita	tobi
ofi	takon
tobi	noti
bila	pikayo

You can practice writing a, i, and o in the following exercise:

bear	nit__
apple	t__kon
tree	it__
dog	of__
tooth	not__
bean	t__bi
dog	__f__
fish	n__n__
stem	__p__
meat	n__p__
oil	b__l__

* * * * * *

Here is a puzzle for you. How many Choctaw words can you find, reading across and down? Put a circle around each word that you can find. Two words have already been marked as examples. When you are finished, you can check with the list below.



Across	Down
nita	noti
oka	tabi
tabi	ahi
apala	apisa

Guide for Choctaw Teachers

How Possum Tricked Wolf

ACTIVITY: Language Arts

GRADE LEVELS: K-3

MATERIALS:

Coloring sheets (sets of 8)
Story in Choctaw, on cassette tape
Guide for the teacher, with assembled set of story sheets
Script (text and pictures)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Appreciation of a Choctaw Folktale.

2. Development of oral (speaking) and aural (listening) language arts skills. These include understanding, new vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation and story telling.

Note: *This activity can be used at several grade levels. The specific objectives and procedures for each grade level will be determined by the teacher.*

PROCEDURES:

Introduction

Give the "title" sheet to each child to color. Tell them in Choctaw that they will hear a story about Possum and Wolf.

Listening

1. Play the story, having the pupils listen without seeing the story sheets.

2. Show the story sheets (in order) one at a time, asking the question: "Yapą natihmi?" (What is happening here?)

   Allow the children to discuss each picture as long as it is necessary to arrive at a group agreement about what is happening.

3. Play the story, displaying the story sheets one at a time, as the story unfolds. The script will tell you when to change from one picture to the next. DO NOT use the script as a literacy lesson for the pupils.

4. Play the story again, with all of the sheets displayed. Point to the appropriate sheet as the story unfolds.

5. Repeat the story one or more times, allowing pupils to point to the appropriate sheet as the story unfolds.

6. Coloring. Organize the class into groups (3-7) in the group), each of which will color a set of sheets. (Or: allow each student to have a set of story sheets to color, assemble into a book, and take home.)

7. Display the sets in the classroom. (or: have pupils assemble their sheets into book form.)

8. Suggestions for further activities (to be determined by the teacher.)

   a. have pupils arrange the story sheets into proper order.

   b. have pupils tell the story (in Choctaw, NOT IN ENGLISH), using the story sheet in Choctaw.

   c. ask questions about the story. (e.g., What is happening in this picture? What is the wolf saying? What is the possum doing? etc.)

   d. read the story from the script, have the pupils follow along with the pictures.

EVALUATION:

☐ USEFUL, IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

_____

_____

_____

☐ NOT USEFUL, FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

_____

_____

_____

☐ WAYS USED, OTHER THAN WHAT THIS GUIDE SUGGESTS:

_____

_____

_____

☐ FURTHER OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____